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ABSTRACT

Despite the obvious parallel which can be drawn between the uses of leisure to benefit the individual, and the use of nonacademic activities and environment to promote individual growth and development, the two perspectives have evolved independently on college campuses. Research into the role, function, and outcomes of leisure have shown that leisure theorists and student development theorists desire similar goals for their students, i.e., socialization, relaxation, and need gratification. Intuitively, educators are aware of the interactive role of leisure in the campus environment of students; however, few studies have empirically related leisure to student development. Student development theory has emphasized a holistic approach to intervention, yet leisure activities, as they relate to student development have been subsumed under the general rubric of extra-curriculum. A holistic approach to leisure on the college campus would integrate the emerging technology of student development with sophisticated student programming. Leisure must be viewed more broadly to encompass both formal and informal activities and aspects of a student's college experience. Student development educators must develop both theories and assessment instruments to assess the holistic role and function of campus leisure as a rich and complex educational resource. (BL)

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Leisure as a Campus Developmental Resource

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Leisure as a Campus Developmental Resource

Leisure on the college campus has been viewed in a variety of ways. One of the earliest approaches has been that of leisure education, i.e., teaching students how to make effective use of their leisure time, both during their student days and as preparation for a balanced leisure life as adults. Another approach endorses the concept of life style with work and leisure viewed complementarily as equally significant components of a rewarding, balanced, and meaningful life style. Yet another approach takes a more limited view of leisure as being primarily recreational, as recreational sport. Still another sees campus leisure as having benefits for the participant, i.e., educational, therapeutic, social, etc. It is this latter perspective that provides the core idea for this paper.

Concurrent with the increased interest in leisure is the rapid spread of the notion of intentional student development, i.e., the application of developmental theory to the facilitation of the affective, cognitive, and physical growth of college students. An extension of the 1949 ACE Student Personnel Point of View, the student development approach also focuses on the utilization of the students' out-of-class life for educational purposes (American College Personnel Association, 1975).

Despite the obvious parallel which can be drawn between the uses of leisure to benefit the individual, and the use of nonacademic activities and environment to promote individual growth and development, the two perspectives have evolved independently and with little cross-fertilization of ideas. The purpose of this paper is to examine the

relationship between leisure and student development and to suggest ways in which leisure can be utilized as a campus developmental resource.

The Benefits of Leisure

Although few authorities have critically examined the developmental consequences of participation in leisure activities, some have made suggestions on the role, function, and outcomes of leisure. For example, Witt and Bishop (1970) examined the literature and identified four functions of leisure: catharsis or the release of emotion; relaxation, i.e., the restoration of energy or a diversion from some other situation; compensation which helps to make up for something missing in one's life; and task generalization or the tendency to choose leisure activities akin to other life activities, usually because similar outcomes are expected. Iso-Ahola (1980) mentions (a) the socialization of the young into society; (b) improving work-related skills through leisure; (c) development of interpersonal and social skills; (d) entertainment and relaxation; (e) enhancement of character and personality; (f) prevention of idleness and antisocial activities; and (g) development of community.

Loesch and Wheeler (1982) list as potential benefits of leisure the following: happiness, creative expression, self-development or self-improvement, self-fulfillment, self-definition, recognition, autonomy, need gratification, and the opportunity for life experimentation. Nine psychological benefits of leisure are listed by Dowd (1984): (a) promotes identification, (b) provides increased autonomy, (c) provides mastery or competency experiences, (d) gives an increased sense of freedom, (e) allows spontaneous commitment and involvement, (f) gives a sense of community and relationship with others. (g) promotes life balance by satisfying unmet needs, (h) promotes creativity and

self-expression, and (i) provides personal meaning to life.

Even a quick comparison of the above listings with the several developmental theories (cf. Chickering, 1971; Erikson, 1968; D. H. Heath, 1968; R. Heath, 1964) will reveal the extent to which leisure theorists and student development theorists are talking about the same kinds of outcomes.

Leisure on the Campus

A purist might demur at the heading for this section, saying that it is oxymoronic or a contradiction in terms. Nevertheless, leisure does exist on the college campus although its presence depends in part on how it is defined. Many see leisure as a function of time allocation--it is whatever is left over after you have taken care of your work and nonwork obligations. Another approach, exemplified in the writings of de Grazia (1964), emphasizes the way in which we use our free time, i.e., leisure must be used in the cultivation of the mind and spirit for their own sakes. However, a more pragmatic definition is Gist and Fava's (1964), "the time which an individual has free from work or other duties and which may be utilized for the purposes of relaxation, diversion, social achievement, or personal development" (p. 411).

If we apply this definition to the college campus, considering the student's work as his/her formal program of studies and, of course, any remunerative jobs he or she may have, the rest of the student's time (excluding household and personal maintenance) is his/her leisure. Thus a college student's leisure may span a range of activities from daydreaming or drinking beer at the campus pub to tutoring disadvantaged children or serving as student body president. The expanded definition allows for

the traditional campus activities and recreation programs, participation as well as watching, informal social activities, and highly organized formal events.

In essence, then, leisure forms a major component of the active campus environment of students, the environment which acts upon them and which they in turn act upon. It may seem a truism to say that this interactive condition has consequences for the actor, that is to say, the student. However, as educators, we believe this to be true and have devised some measures by which to assess these consequences. The problem lies in determining which interactions lead to which desirable consequences, in this case, student growth and development.

The literature relating leisure and student development is nonexistent and that relating leisure to college students is meagre at best. The entire issue of Leisure Today (Mendell, 1980), which appeared in the Journal of Physical Education and Recreation dealt with campus recreation. In that issue, Mobley (1980) called for a "holistic concept" of leisure on the campus, one in which all leisure activities are coordinated, regardless of which units they are housed in. Miller (1974) argued that the leisure life style adopted by college students is a reflection of their developing attitude and value systems about the world around them and that this in turn will shape the leisure style of society 10 or 20 years later. Weiner, Payne, and Remer (1980) analyzed 382 college catalogues and found that, while a majority of responding institutions (80%) offered some identifiable career planning service, only 16% provided leisure planning services. McEwen and Malley (1977) described one such service at the Southern Illinois University. In a study of the work and leisure orientation of 516 university students,

Weiner and Hunt (1983) found that, although students were positively oriented to both work and leisure, they possessed a stronger orientation toward leisure. At the University of Oregon, Wyant (1976) described a campus event called the "Leisure Faire" at which students visited exhibits, booths, and activities relating to campus leisure while Baiardo (1974) described a program of leisure studies classes in a residence hall at San Jose State College and felt that it motivated some students to participate in activities, facilitated communication, and helped create community.

As can be seen, most of the authors were concerned with enhancing the orientation of college students toward leisure opportunities on the college campus. However, to identify student leisure activities as student developmental opportunities, we must go further. The task is not simply to help students make more effective use of their leisure but to see leisure activities as playing an influential role in enhancing their growth and development during the college year. If we return to our earlier definition of campus leisure as embracing formal and informal nonacademic and nonwork activities we can then begin to make some beginning assessments of the influence of these activities on education and development.

College Student Development

For many years, college student personnel professionals derived their philosophical inspiration and role justification from the American Council on Education's (1937), The Student Personnel Point of View, a manifesto which imposed upon institutions of higher learning the "obligation to consider the student as a whole . . .", placing an emphasis

upon the "development of the student as a person rather than upon his intellectual training alone" (p. 1). A dozen years later another American Council on Education committee (1949), this time under the direction of E. G. Williamson, issued a revised statement which reiterated the earlier commitment to the "whole student" and expanded it.

The 1960s witnessed a burgeoning research literature centered on the college student (Astin, 1968; Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Keniston, 1971; Sanford, 1962) as an appropriate subject for study and, with the events on the Berkeley campus of the University of California providing a needed but unwelcome stimulus, launched a re-examination of the role of the student personnel profession. Beginning with the report of the Committee on the Student in Higher Education (1968), a series of position papers emerged from the several professional associations outlining the foundational precepts of a reconceptualization of the student services function in higher education based upon the principles of human development and applied to the college student (American College Personnel Association, 1975; Brown, 1972; Council of Student Personnel Associations in Higher Education, 1972; Miller & Prince, 1976). This new/old approach was known as student development. Derived from its American Council on Education antecedents which were essentially atheoretical, the new movement, for such it became, used developmental theory as the basis for deliberate intentional out-of-class educational interventions instigated by student development specialists.

During the past decade the literature of student development expanded rapidly as a number of essays, how-to-do-it papers, research articles, as well as books were devoted to elaborating the concept. While for a time it appeared that much of student development consisted

simply of relabeling traditional student personnel work without substantive changes in rationale or approach, it would appear that a more sophisticated view would see the student development approach as dependent upon a theoretical base, i.e., program interventions designed to bring about development change should be derived from a theoretical statement of expected change. The theory provides the logic or rationale for the anticipated result of a planned intervention.

The Extracurriculum and Student Development

Most of the literature concerned with the relationship between leisure and student development is subsumed under the general rubric of the extracurriculum, i.e., student organized out-of-class student organizations and activities. For example, Berman (1978) identified six skill areas which could be learned through student activities: group-process skills, decision-making skills, organizational and administrative skills, budgeting and accounting skills, bureaucratic skills, and programming skills. In a study of former student leaders, Schuh and Laverty (1983) reported that the student leaders responding felt that their involvement had its greatest influence on their development of skills such as teamwork, organizing, assertiveness, decision making, etc. Interestingly, campus leadership experience had the least influence on subsequent leisure skills. While neither the number of campus organizational affiliations nor the number of offices held in organizations had a significant relationship to identity achievement, Weston and Stein (1977) found that the degree of activity (from "not too active" to "very active") in campus organizations was significant. Scott (1975) administered the Personal Orientation Inventory (Shostrom, 1966) to residence hall staff, student leaders, and a randomly selected sample of residents

and found that both staff and leaders showed greated gains in self-actualization during an academic year than did other residence hall students. Residence hall students, in turn, showed greater gains than did non-residence hall students. Kleiber (1980) hypothesized that students who were actively engaged during their free time would be less anxious and feel more in control of their environments. He found limited support for his hypothesis. In a study of the effect of certain academic and extra-class college experiences on attitude changes, Jones and Finnell (1972) found a relationship between intramural participation, attendance at campus concerts and lectures and attitude change on a social conscience scale.

Another relevant study was reported by Jackson (1977). He attempted to relate seven factorially derived clusters of campus activities to scales on the Student Development Task Inventory (SDTI) (Prince, Miller, & Winston, 1974) for a large sample (849) of students from eight different campuses. Moderate correlations were found between personal enrichment activities and the developmental tasks of autonomy, mature interpersonal relationships, and life purpose; the realistic orientation behaviors were moderately correlated with developing autonomy and developing life purpose. A similar study is being conducted by Butler (personal communication, 1983) at California State College, Bakersfield. Butler is interested in possible relationships between the campus activities of college freshmen and gains in the developmental tasks of the SDTI. He is obtaining measures of the intensity of activity participation, hypothesizing that those students who devote more time to an activity with developmental potential will show greater gains than those who participate less intensively.

For the most part the studies cited above yield modest, yet promising, evidence that there may be a relationship between certain kinds of leisure, i.e., off-duty, extracurricular activities and consequent gains in developmental status. However, not all the evidence is positive. Sowa and Gressard (1983) assessed the relationship between participation in varsity athletics and student developmental tasks. While there were few differences between athletes and non-athletes, the authors found that athletes had more difficulty with some developmental tasks, i.e., educational plans, career plans, and mature relationships with peers.

Integrating Leisure and Developmental Goals

While there are a number of similarities between approaches to campus leisure and the student development movement there are some significant disjunctures as well. Chief among the differing perspectives is the goal each approach appears to envision for the campus and higher education. The leisure advocates are generally interested in the development of appropriate leisure behavior while students are on campus so that they can incorporate that learned behavior into their adult life styles. The student development approach, on the other hand, involves theory-based activity interventions designed to bring about enhanced or accelerated developmental changes. The problem with most leisure approaches is that their proponents do not generally look at the purposes or consequences of augmenting leisure behavior; the behavior is its own end. Within the college environment, at least, the purpose should not simply be to develop better leisure behaviors but, rather, to expand upon the ways in which we can use a greater variety of campus experiences, including leisure, to promote the educational growth of

students, a purpose which is apprehended by student development educators.

Unfortunately our tools for accomplishing this purpose are as primitive as our understanding of the processes which may be involved. The question is relatively simple: What kind of leisure activity, when engaged in by a participant, will result in what kind of developmental change or cognitive learning by that participant? It is as if we were to consider the leisure activity to be a stimulus and the resultant changes a response. By collecting a repertoire of these "S-R bonds," the student development educator could theoretically diagnose a problem or developmental deficiency, prescribe and arrange the corrective intervention, and evaluate the outcome.

Luckily, however, this Skinnerian scenario is probably not possible to enact in the foreseeable future and hopefully never will be. But in the sense that all of education is a series of guided experiences designed to bring about certain desirable ends, employing leisure activities as a vehicle for student developmental change would represent simply one more approach to "educating the whole student," a holistic and humanistic philosophy of education as enunciated in the Student Personnel Point of View (American Council on Education, 1937, 1949).

How could the process be elaborated in the field of student affairs and on the campus? Two major approaches are suggested: The first is through what might be called the emerging technology of student development, and the second involves the utilization of ever more sophisticated means of student programming.

The Technology of Student Development

More research studies which attempt to link purportedly developmental activities or interventions with student growth are needed (Butler, personal communication, 1983; Jackson, 1977; Scott, 1975). From such studies we can begin to see whether it will be possible for student development staff to prescribe certain types of leisure activities in order to attain developmental goals or if we can design campus mini-environments which can as a whole influence student growth in desirable directions.

However promising such inquiries may appear to be, useful results will not be forthcoming unless and until more sensitive and psychometrically sound instruments are designed to measure progress toward developmental goals. The construction of such a measurement technology will depend in turn upon the elaboration and specification of additional explanatory and predictive theories of student development. Fortunately, these processes are interdependent; in order to test theory we must develop appropriate instruments which can then be applied to the study of outcomes which, insofar as they test theory, will result in the further modification of theory, and so on.

Ad hoc Student Programming

At the same time that research and theory building and testing is proceeding, practitioners in the field will be reading the literature and building programs which in their best judgment represent effective interventions, with or without a stamp of approval from theoreticians or researchers. In other words, programs will continue to be mounted by students and student affairs staff on an ad hoc basis to meet certain campus needs. To the extent that these ad hoc programs can be based upon

extant theory or research, they should be, but it should be recognized by all that campus leisure activities and programs can serve a variety of valid purposes, not all of them developmental. These programs should, however, sooner or later be evaluated to see what is occurring as a result. It is in this fashion that practice and research can be linked to improve and advance both programming and technology without unduly delaying or subordinating either.

Summary and Conclusions

This paper has examined briefly the definition and concept of leisure and reviewed some of the sparse literature which relates leisure to the college campus and its students. After a summary of the college student development approach to out-of-class education and its implementation through student activities programming, it was suggested that there is a need for programs and research which would forge a link between leisure activities, broadly defined, and their consequences for the growth and development of student participants.

What, then, are the implications of this perspective for the practitioner on the college campus? Several directions come to mind:

1. By conceptualizing leisure more broadly--as all of those out-of-class activities which form the ambiance, environment, or climate of the campus, the student development educator has a greater range of activities within which to work developmentally.

2. By the same token, work with individual students will benefit as their life on the college campus is viewed as life style, holistic, and comprised of informal as well as formal activities.

3. The practitioner can and should begin to examine the relative

contribution of other campus agencies and departments to both campus climate and individual experience, i.e., the student union, campus recreation, the drama department, the art and music departments, etc. While not all student development is the product of the student affairs units, student affairs can take the lead in coordinating these activities.

4. Student development educators should begin to identify those elements of campus experience, individual and environmental, which are amenable to their deliberate and intentional manipulation, i.e., those activities which they can affect through their personal and active involvement and stimulation or intervention.

5. Those theories of student development which best provide a framework for understanding and planning staff efforts to bring about environmental and individual change should be identified. The theory or theories will help plan for those changes.

6. Each program intervention should be designed with some means of evaluating whether or not what occurred had an effect. Did anything happen, or did what was planned actually occur?

7. The area of career development is particularly well suited to deal with the question of student development through leisure. To conceptualize career development in terms of life style planning, one must include the leisure dimension (Ripley & O'Brien, 1976).

Essentially, this paper has proposed that student development educators, particularly those who are concerned with organized student activities, broaden their understanding of student life to include the use of leisure (formal and informal activities) as a vehicle for intentional student development. To do so will require that as much attention be given to the nonorganized, informal life of the campus as to the more

visible, organized activities. It would not require the addition of more staff or facilities, but it would require thinking about student life in a more holistic sense, with a better understanding of the way in which various facets of leisure impinge upon and create the total learning environment of students. Conceptualizing leisure in this fashion clarifies and highlights the rich and complex educational resources available on the typical college campus, a perspective which can lead to a more creative and encompassing programming approach.

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